



Twenty-seven Indiana schools receive grants for robotics competition

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TERRE HAUTE— Terre Haute South Vigo High School was among 27 Indiana high schools or postsecondary institutions receiving grants totaling \$114,000 that will be used to fund teams competing in the FIRST Robotics program, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development has announced. Terre Haute South received \$6,000.

An international program titled For Inspiration & Recognition of Science and Technology (aka “FIRST”) was founded by inventor Dean Kamen to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people. The program’s goal is to help young people recognize the opportunity, power and joy of solving problems through science, technology and engineering.

“Engineering and scientific innovation are very important to the economic future of our state,” said Teresa Voors, commissioner of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development. “This program helps provide an education and career path for young people who might not otherwise have discovered an interest in science and technology, she said.”

“It has been shown that students who participate in FIRST Robotics are 50 percent more likely to attend college and twice as likely to major in science or engineering,” Voors said.

Most of the Indiana teams will compete in the fourth annual Boilermaker Regional, at Purdue University in March. At the competition, high-school students, teachers and engineers will design and build robots to race around a track, manipulating 40-foot inflated “Trackballs” to score additional points.

The FIRST Robotics program helps students develop their science, technology, entrepreneurship and math skills so important for the world of work in the 21st century.

Participants also develop skills such as brainstorming, real-world teamwork, dedicated mentoring, managing timelines and meeting deadlines. The program also involves partnerships with business and industry officials as the students often work side by side with engineers solving complex engineering challenges.

The grants announced today were funded from the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006.

For more information on the FIRST Robotics program, go to the U.S. FIRST Robotics Web site at www.usfirst.org or contact Terri Schulz at (317) 233-5663 or tschulz@dwd.in.gov.

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